

# INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

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A LECTURE

BY

COL. ROB'T G. INGERSOLL.

1433-1899

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## INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. INGERSOLL said—

Ladies and gentlemen, in the first place I want to admit that there are a great many good people, quite pious people, who don't agree with me, and all that proves in the world is that I don't agree with them. I am not endeavoring to force my ideas or notions upon other people, but I am saying what little I can to induce everybody in the world to grant to every other person every right he claims for himself. [Applause.] I claim, standing under the flag of nature, under the blue and the stars, that I am the peer of any other man, and have the right to think and to express my thoughts. [Applause.] I claim that in the presence of the Unknown, and upon a subject that nobody knows anything about, and never did, I have as good a right to *guess* as anybody else. [Applause.] The gentlemen who hold views against mine, if they had any evidence, would have no fears—not the slightest. If a man has a diamond that has been examined by the lapidaries of the world, and some ignorant stonemason tells him that it is nothing but an ordinary rock, he laughs at him; but if it has not been examined by lapidaries, and he is a little suspicious himself that it is not genuine, it makes him mad. [Laughter.] Any doctrine that will not bear investigation is not a fit tenant for the mind of an honest man. [Applause.] Any man who is afraid to have his doctrine investigated is not only a coward but a hypocrite. [Applause.] Now, all I ask is simply an opportunity to say my say. I will give that right to everybody else in the world. I understand that owing to my success in the lecture field several clergymen have taken it into their heads to lecture—some of them, I believe, this evening. [Laughter.] I say all that I claim is the right I give to others, and any man who will not give that right is a dishonest man, no matter what church he may belong to or not belong to—if he does not freely accord to all others the right to think, he is not an honest man. I said some time ago that if there was any being who would eternally damn one of his children for the expression of an honest opinion that he was not a God, but that he was a demon; and from that they have said first, that I did not believe in any God and, secondly, that I called him a demon. If I did not believe in him how could I call him any thing? These things hardly hang together. But that makes no difference; I expect to be maligned; I expect to be slandered; I expect to have my reputation blackened by gentlemen who are not fit to blacken my shoes. [Applause]. But letting that pass—

I simply believe in liberty, that is my religion; that is the altar where I worship; that is my shrine—that every human being shall have every right that I have—that is my religion. I am going to live up to it and going to say what little I can to make the American people brave enough and generous enough and kind enough to give everybody else the rights they have themselves. Can there ever be any progress in this world to amount to anything until we have liberty? The thoughts of a man who is not free are not worth much—not much. A man who thinks with the club of a creed above his head—a man who thinks casting his eyes askance at the flames of Hell, is not apt to have very good thoughts. And for my part, I would not care to have any status or social position even in Heaven if I had to admit that I never would have been there only I got scared. When we are frightened we do not think very well. If you want to get at the honest thoughts of a man he must be free. If he is not free you will not get his honest thought. You won't trade with a merchant, if he is free; you won't employ him if he is a lawyer, if he is free; you won't call him if he is a doctor, if he is free; and what are you going to get out of him but hypocrisy? Force will not make thinkers, but hypocrites. A minister told me awhile ago, "Ingersoll," he says, "if you do not believe the Bible you ought not to say so." Says I, "Do you believe the Bible?" He says, "I do." I says, "I don't know whether you do or not; may be you are following the advice you gave me; how shall I know whether you believe it or not?" Now, I shall die without knowing whether that man believed the Bible or not. [Laughter.] There is no way that I can possibly find out, because he said that even if he did not believe it he would not say so. Now, I read, for instance, a book. Now, let us be honest. Suppose that a clergyman and I were on an island—nobody but us two—and I were to read a book, and I honestly believed it untrue, and he asked me about it—what ought I to say? Ought I to say I believed it, and be lying, or ought I to say I did not?—that is the question; and the church can take its choice between honest men, who differ, and hypocrites, who differ, but say they do not—you can have your choice, all of you. If you give to us liberty, you will have in this country a splendid diversity of individuality; but if on the contrary you say men shall think so and so, you will have the sameness of stupid nonsense. In my judgment, it is the duty of every man to



think and express his thoughts; but at the same time do not make martyrs of yourselves. Those people that are not willing you should be honest, they are not worth dying for, they are not worth being a martyr for, and if you are afraid you cannot support your wife and children in this town and express your honest thought, why keep it to yourself, but if there is such a man here he is a living certificate of the meanness of the community in which he lives. Go right along, if you are afraid it will take food from the mouths of your dear babes—if you are afraid you cannot clothe your wife and children, go along with them to church, say amen in as near the right place as you can, if you happen to be awake [laughter] and I will do your talking for you. I will say my say, and the time will come when every man in the country will be astonished, that there ever was a time that everybody had not the right to speak his honest thoughts. If there is a man here or in this town, preacher or otherwise, who is not willing that I should think and speak, he is just so much nearer a barbarian than I am. Civilization is liberty, slavery is barbarism; civilization is intelligence, slavery is ignorance; and if we are any nearer free than were our fathers, it is because we have got better heads and more brains in them—that is the reason. Every man who has invented anything for the use and convenience of man has helped raise his fellow man, and all we have found out of the laws and forces of nature so that we are finally enabled to bring these forces of nature into subjection, to give us better houses, better food, better clothes—these are the real civilizers of our race; and the men who stand and predict hell, they are not the civilizers of our race; the men who cut each other's throats because they fell out about baptism—they are not the civilizers of my race—the men who built the inquisitions and put into dungeons all the grand and honest men they could find—they are not the civilizers of my race.

The men who have corrupted the imaginations and hearts of men by their infamous dogma of hell—they are not the civilizers of my race. [Applause.] The men who have been predicting good for mankind, the men who have found some way to get us better homes and better houses and better education, the men who have allowed us to make slaves of the blind forces of nature—they have made this world fit to live in.

I want to prove to you if I can that this

is all a question of intellectual development, a question of sense, and the more a man knows the more liberal he is; the less a man knows the more bigoted he is. The less a man knows the more certain he is that he knows it, and the more a man knows the better satisfied he is that he is entirely ignorant. Great knowledge is philosophic, and little, narrow, contemptible knowledge is bigoted and hateful. I want to prove it to you. I saw a little while ago models of nearly everything man has made for his use—nearly everything. I saw models of all the water craft; from the rude dugout in which paddled the naked savage, with his forehead about half as high as his teeth were long—[laughter]—all the water craft from that dugout up to a man-of-war that carries a hundred guns and miles of canvas—from that rude dugout to a steam ship that turns its brave prow from the port of New York, with three thousand miles of foaming billows before it, and not missing a throb or beat of its mighty iron heart from one shore to the other. I saw there their ideas of weapons, from the rude club, such as was seized by that same barbarian as he emerged from his den in the morning, hunting a snake for his dinner; from that club to the boomerang, to the dagger, to the sword, to the blunderbuss, to the old flint-lock, to the cap-lock, to the needle-gun, to the cannon invented by Krupp, capable of hurling a ball weighing two thousand pounds through eighteen inches of solid steel. I saw their ideas of defensive armor, from the turtle-shell which one of these gentlemen lashed upon his breast preparatory to going to war, or the skin of a porcupine, dried with the quills on, that he pulled on his orthodox head [laughter] before he sallied forth. By "orthodox" I mean a man who has quit growing, not simply in religion, but in everything; whenever a man is done he is orthodox; whenever he thinks he has found out all, he is orthodox; when he becomes a drag on the swift car of progress, he is orthodox. I saw their defensive armor, from the turtle-shell and the porcupine skin to the shirts of mail of the middle ages, that defied the edge of the sword and the point of the spear. I saw their ideas of agricultural implements, from the crooked stick that was attached to the horn of an ox by some twisted straw to the agricultural implements of to-day, that make it possible for a man to cultivate the soil without being an ignoramus. When they had none of these agricultural implements—when they depended upon one crop—they were superstitious, for if the frosts



struck one crop they thought the gods were angry with them. Now, with the implements, machinery and knowledge of mechanics of to-day, people have found out that no man can be good enough nor bad enough to cause a frost. After having found out these things are contrary to the laws of nature, they began to raise more than one kind of crop. If the frost strikes one they have the other; if it happens to strike all in that locality there is a surplus somewhere else, and that surplus is distributed by railways and steamers and by the thousand ways that we have to distribute these things; and as a consequence the agriculturist begins to think and reason, and now for the first time in the history of the world the agriculturist begins to stand upon a level with the mechanic and with the man who has confidence in the laws and facts of nature. (Applause.) I saw there their musical instruments, from the tom-tom (that is a hoop with two strings of raw hide drawn across it) to the instruments we have that make the common air blossom with melody. I saw their ideas of ornaments, from a string of the claws of a wild beast that once ornamented the dusky bosom of some savage belle to the rubies and sapphires and diamonds with which civilization to-day is familiar. I saw their books, written upon the shoulder blades of sheep, upon the bark of trees, down to the illustrated volumes that are now in the libraries of the world. I saw their ideas of paintings, from the rude daubs of yellow mud to the grand pictures we see in the art galleries of to-day. I saw their ideas of sculpture, from a monster god with several legs, a good many noses, a great many eyes, and one little, contemptible, brainless head, to the sculpture that we have, where the marble is clothed with such personality that it seems almost impudence to touch it without an introduction. I saw all these things, and how men had gradually improved through the generations that are dead. And I saw at the same time a row of men's skulls—skulls from the Bushmen of Australia, skulls from the centre of Africa, skulls from the farthest islands of the Pacific, skulls from this country—from the aborigines of America, skulls of the Aztecs up to the best skulls, or many of the best of the last generation; and I noticed there was the same difference between the skulls as between the products of the skulls [applause] the same between that skull and that, as between the dugout and the man-of-war, as between the dugout and the steamship, as between

the tom-tom and an opera of Verdi, as between those ancient agricultural implements and ours, as between that yellow daub and that landscape, as between that stone god and a statue of to-day, and I said to myself, this is a question of intellectual development, this is a question of brain. The man has advanced just in proportion as he has mingled his thoughts with his labor, and just in proportion that his brain has gotten into partnership with his hand. Man has advanced just as he has developed intellectually, and no other way. That skull was a low den in which crawled and groped the meaner and baser instincts of mankind, and this was a temple in which dwelt love, liberty and joy. Why is it that we have advanced in the arts? It is because every incentive has been held out to the world, because we want better clubs or better cannon with which to kill our fellow Christians; we want better music, we want better houses; and any man who will invent them, and any man who will give them to us we will clothe him in gold and glory; we will crown him with honor. That gentleman in his dug-out not only had his ideas of mechanics, but he was a politician. [Laughter.] His idea of politics was might makes right; and it will take thousands of years before the world will be willing to say that right makes might. That was his idea of politics; and he had another idea—that all power came from the clouds, and that every armed thief that lived upon the honest labor of mankind had had poured out upon his head the divine oil of authority. He didn't believe the power to govern came from the people; he did not believe that the great mass of people had any right whatever, or that the great mass of people could be allowed the liberty of thought—and we have thousands of such to-day. They say thought is dangerous—don't investigate; don't inquire; just believe; shut your eyes, and then you are safe. You must not hear this man or that man or some other man, or our dear doctrines will be overturned, and we have nobody on our side except a large majority; we have nobody on our side except the wealth and respectability of the world; we have nobody on our side except the Infinite God, and we are afraid that one man, in one or two hours, will beat the whole party. [Sensation.] This man [in the dug out] also had his ideas of religion—that fellow was orthodox [laughter], and any man who differed with him he called an infidel, an atheist, an outcast, and warned everybody against him. He had his religion—he



believed in hell; he was glad of it; he enjoyed it; it was a great source of comfort to him to think when he didn't like people that he would have the pleasure of looking over and seeing them squirm upon the gridiron. [Laughter.] When any man said he didn't believe there was a hell this gentleman got up in his pulpit and called him a "hyena." [Laughter.] That fellow believed in a devil, too; that lowest skull was a devil factory—he believed in him. He believed he had a long tail adorned with a fiery dart; he believed he had wings like a bat, and had a pleasant habit of breathing sulphur; and he believed he had a cloven foot—such as most of your clergymen think I am blessed with myself. [Laughter.] They are shepherds of the sheep, the people are the sheep—that is all they are—they have to be watched and guarded by these shepherds and protected from the wolf who wants to reason with them—that is the doctrine. Now, all I claim is the same right to improve on that gentleman's politics, as on the dug out, and the same right to improve upon his religion as upon his plough, or the musical instrument known as the tom-tom—that is all. Now, suppose the King and Priest, if there was one, and there probably was one, as the farther you go back the more ignorant you find mankind and the thicker you find these gentlemen—suppose the King and Priest had said, "That dugout is the best boat that ever can be built; we got the model of that from Neptune, the god of the seas a, and I guess the god of the water knows how to build a boat, and any man that says he can improve it by putting a stick in the middle with a rag on the end of it and has any talk about the wind blowing this away and that, he is a heretic—he is a blasphemer—honor bright—what in your judgment would have been the effect upon the circumnavigation of the globe? I think we would have been on the other side yet. [Laughter.] Suppose the King and Priest had said "That plow is the best that ever can be invented and the model of that was given to a pious farmer in a holy dream, and that twisted straw is the *ne plus ultra* of all twisted things, and any man who says he can out-twist it, we will twist him." [Laughter.] Suppose the King and Priest had said "That tom-tom is the finest instrument of music in the world—that is the kind of music found in Heaven; an angel sat upon the edge of a glorified cloud playing upon that tom-tom and became so entranced with the music

that in a kind of ecstasy she dropped it and that is how we got it, and any man who talks about putting any improvement on that, he is not fit to live."

Let me ask you—do you believe if that had been done that the human ears ever would have been enriched with the divine symphonies of Beethoven? All I claim is the same right to improve upon this barbarians' ideas of politics and religion as upon everything else, and whether it is an improvement or not, I have a right to suggest it—that is my doctrine. [Applause.] They say to me, "God will punish you forever, if you do these things." Very well. I will settle with him. I had rather settle with him than any of his agents. I do not like them very well. In theology I am a granger—I do not believe in middle men [sensation]; what little business I have with Heaven I will attend to myself. [Laughter.] Our fathers thought, just as many now think, that you could force men to think your way, and if they failed to do it by reason, they tried it another way. I used to read about it when I was a boy—it did not seem to me that these things were true; it did not seem to me that there ever was such heartless bigotry in the heart of man; but there was and is to-night. I used to read about it—I did not appreciate it—I never appreciated it until I saw the arguments of those gentlemen. They used to use just such arguments as that man in the dugout would have used to the next man ahead of him. This low miserable skull—this next man was a little higher, and this fellow behind called him a heretic, and the next was still a little higher, and he was called an infidel. And, so it went on through the whole row—always calling the man who was ahead an infidel and a heretic. No man was ever called so who was behind the army of progress. It has always been the man ahead that has been called the heretic. Heresy is the last and best thought always. Heresy extends the hospitality of the brain to a new idea; that is what the rotting says to the growing; that is what the dweller in the swamp says to the man on the sun-lit hill; that is what the man in the darkness cries out to the grand man upon whose forehead is shining the dawn of a grander day; that is what the coffin says to the cradle. Orthodoxy is a kind of shroud, and heresy is a banner—the one is a fog and the other a star shining forever above the cradle of truth. I do not mean simply in religion, I mean in everything, and the idea I wish to impress upon you is that you should keep



your minds open to all the influences of nature; you should keep your minds open to reason; hear what a man has to say, and do not let the turtle-shell of bigotry grow above your brain. Give everybody a chance and an opportunity; that is all.

I saw the arguments that those gentlemen have used on each other through all the ages. I saw a little bit of a thumb screw not more than so long [illustrating] and attached to each end was a screw and the inner surface was trimmed with little protuberances to prevent their slipping; and when some man doubted—when a man had an idea, then those that did not have an idea put the thumb-screw upon him who did. He had doubted something. For instance, they told him Christ says you must love your enemies; he says “I do not know about that;” then they said “we will show you!” “Do unto others as you would be done by” they said is the doctrine. He doubted, “we will show you that it *is*!” So they put this screw on; and in the name of universal love and universal forgiveness—“pray for those who despitefully use you,” they began screwing these pieces of iron into him—always done in the name of religion—always. It never was done in the name of reason, never was done in the name of science—never. No man was ever persecuted in defense of a truth—never. No man was ever persecuted except in defense of a lie—never. This man had fallen out with them about something; he did not understand it as they did. For instance he said: “I do not believe there ever was a man whose strength was in his hair.” They said: “You don’t? We’ll show you!” “I do not believe,” he says, “that a fish ever swallowed a man to save his life.” “You don’t? Well, we’ll show you!” And so they put this on, and generally the man would recant and say, “Well, I’ll take it back.” Well I think I should. [Laughter.] Such men are not worth dying for. The idea of dying for a man that would tear the flesh of another on account of an honest difference of opinion—such a man is not worth dying for, he is not worth living for, and if I was in a position that I could not send a bullet through his brain, I would recant. I would say: “You write it down and I will sign it—I will admit that there is one God, or a million—suit yourself; one hell or a billion; you just write it—only stop this screw. You are not worth suffering for, you are not worth dying for and I am never going to take the part of any Lord that won’t take my part—you just write it

down and I’ll sign it.” But there was now and then a man who would not do that. He said “No, I believe I am right, and I will die for it,” and I suppose we owe what little progress we have made to a few men in all ages of the world who really stood by their convictions. The men who stood by the truth and the men who stood by a fact, they are the men that have helped raise this world [applause] and in every age there has been some sublime and tender soul who was true to his convictions and who really lived to make men better. In every age some man carried the torch of progress and handed it to some other, and it has been carried through all the dark ages of barbarism, and had it not been for such men we would have been naked and uncivilized to-night, with pictures of wild beasts tattooed on our skins, dancing around some dried snake fetish. And when a man would not recant these men in the name of the love of the Lord, screwed them down to the last thread of agony and threw them into some dungeon, where in the throbbing silence of darkness they suffered the pangs of the fabled damned, and this was done in the name of civilization, love and order, and in the name of the most merciful Christ.

There is no thumb-screw now; they are rusting away; but every man in this town who is not willing that another shall do his own thinking and will try to prevent it has in him the same hellish spirit that made and used that very instrument of torture, and the only reason he does not use it to-day is because he cannot. [Applause.] The reason that I speak here to-night is because they cannot help it. [Applause.]

I saw at the same time a beautiful little instrument for the propagation of kindness, called “The Scavenger’s Daughter.”

[The lecturer here described and illustrated the construction of the instrument.]

The victim would be thrown upon that instrument and the strain upon the muscles was such that insanity would sometimes come to his relief. See what we owe to the civilizing influence of the gentlemen who have made a certain idea in metaphysics necessary to salvation—see what we owe to them.

I saw a collar of torture which they put about the neck of their victim, and inside of that there were a hundred points so that the victim could not stir without the skin being punctured with these points, and after a little while the throat would swell and suffocation would end the agony, and they would have that done in the presence of his wife and weeping children. That



was all done so that finally everybody would love everybody else as his brother. [Laughter.] I saw a rack. Imagine a wagon with a windlass on each end, and each windlass armed with leather bands, and a ratchet that prevented slipping. The victim was placed upon this. May be he had denied something that some idiot said was true; may be he had a discussion—a division of opinion with a man like John Calvin. John Calvin said Christ was the Eternal Son of God and Michael Servetus said that Christ was the son of the Eternal God. That was the only difference of opinion. Think of it! What an important thing it was! How it would have affected the price of food! “Christ is the Eternal Son of God,” said one; “No,” said the other, “Christ is the son of the Eternal God”—that was all, and for that difference of opinion Michael Servetus was burned at a slow fire of green wood, and the wind happening to blow the flames from him instead of towards him, he was in the most terrible agony, writhing for minutes and minutes, and hours and hours, and finally he begged and implored those wretches to move him so that the wind would blow the flames against him and destroy him without such hellish agony, but they were so filled with the doctrine of “love your enemies” that they would not do it. [Laughter.] I never will, for my part, depend upon any religion that has ever shed a drop of human blood.

Upon this rack I have described this victim was placed, and these chains were attached to his ankles and then to his wrists, and clergymen, good men! pious men! men that were shocked at the immorality of their day! they talked about playing cards and the horrible crime of dancing! Oh! how such things shocked them; men going to theatres and seeing a play written by the grandest genius the world ever has produced—how it shocked their sublime and tender souls! but they commenced turning this machine and they kept on turning until the ankles, knees, hips, elbows, shoulders and wrists were all dislocated and the victim was red with the sweat of agony, and they had standing by a physician to feel the pulse, so that the last faint flutter of life would not leave his veins. Did they wish to save his life? Yes. In mercy? No! simply that they might have the pleasure of racking him once again. That is the spirit, and it is a spirit born of the doctrine that there is upon the throne of the universe a being who will eternally damn his children, and they said: “If God is going to have the supreme happiness of

burning them forever, certainly he ought not to begrudge to us the joy of burning them for an hour or two.” That was their doctrine, and when I read these things it seems to me that I have suffered them myself.

When I look upon those instruments I look upon them as though I had suffered all these tortures myself. It seems to me as though I had stood upon the shore an exile and looked with tear-filled eyes towards home and native land. It seems as though my nails had been plucked out and into the bleeding flesh needles had been thrust; as though my eye-lids had been torn away and I had been set out in the ardent rays of the sun; as though I had been set out upon the sands of the sea and drowned by the inexorable tide; as though I had been in the dungeon waiting for the coming footsteps of relief; as though I had been upon the scaffold and seen the glittering axe falling upon me; and seen bending above me the white faces of hypocrite priests; as though I had been taken from my wife and children to the public square, where faggots had been piled around me and the flames had climbed around my limbs and scorched my eyes to blindness; as though my ashes had been scattered by all the hands of hatred; and I feel like saying, that while I live I will do what little I can to preserve and agument the rights of men, women and children; while I live I will do a little something so that they who come after me shall have the right to think and express that thought. The trouble is those who oppose us pretend they are better than we are. They are more moral, they are kinder, they are more generous. I deny it. They are not. And if they are the ones that are to be saved in another world and if those who simply think they are honest and express that honest thought are to be damned, there will be but very little originality, to say the least of it, in heaven. [Laughter.] They say they are better than we are—and to show you how much better they are I have got at home copies of some letters that passed between gentlemen high in the church several hundred years ago and the question was this: “Ought we to cut out the tongues of blasphemers before we burn them? And they finally decided that they ought to do so, and I will tell you the reason they gave. They said if they were not cut out that while they were being burned, they might by their heresies scandalize the gentlemen who would bring the wood [laughter]; the were too good to hear these things and they might be in-



jured; and the same idea appears to prevail in this world now that they are too good and they must not be shocked. They say to us, "You must not shock us, and when you say there is no hell we are shocked. You must not say that." When I go to church and they tell me there is a hell I must not get shocked; and if they tell me that there is not only a hell, but that I am going to it, I must not be shocked. [Laughter.] Even if they take the next step and act as though they would be glad to see me there, still I must not be shocked, I will agree to keep from being shocked as long as anybody in the world—they can say what they please; I will not get shocked but let me say it too. You send missionaries to Turkey and tell them that the Koran is a lie. You shock them. You tell them that Mahomet was not a prophet, you shock them. It is too bad to shock them. You go to India and you tell them that Vishnu was nothing, that Purana was nothing, that Buddha was nobody and your Brahma, he is nothing. Why do you shock these people? You should not do that; you ought not to hurt their feelings. I tell you no man on earth has a right to be shocked at the expression of an honest opinion when it is kindly done, and I don't believe there is any God in the universe who has put a curtain over a fact and make it a crime for the honest hand of investigation to endeavor to draw that curtain. [Applause.]

This world has not been fit to live in fifty years. There is no liberty in it—very little. Why, it is only a few years ago that all the Christian nations were engaged in the slave trade. It was not until 1808, that England abolished the slave trade, and up to that time her priests in her churches, and her judges on her benches, owned stock in slave ships, and luxuriated on the profits of piracy and murder; and when a man stood up and denounced it, they mobbed him as though he had been a common burglar or a horse thief. Think of it! It was not until the 28th day of August, 1833, that England abolished slavery in her colonies; and it was not until the first day of January, 1862, that Abraham Lincoln by direction of the entire North, wiped that infamy out of this country; and I never speak of Abraham Lincoln but I want to say that he was in my judgement in many respects the grandest man ever President of the United States. I say that upon his tomb there ought to be this line—and I know of no other man deserving it so well as he: "Here lies one who having been clothed

with almost absolute power never abused it except upon the side of mercy." Just think of it! Our churches and best people, as they call themselves, defending the institution of slavery. When I was a little boy I used to see steamers go down the Mississippi river with hundreds of men and women chained hand to hand, and even children, and men standing about them with whips in their hands and pistols in their pockets in the name of liberty, in the name of civilization and in the name of religion! I used to hear them preach to these slaves in the South and the only text they ever took was "Servants be obedient unto your masters." That was the salutation of the most merciful God to a man whose back was bleeding, that was the salvation of the most merciful God to the slave mother bending over an empty cradle, to the women from whose breast a child had been stolen—"Servants be obedient unto your masters." That was what they said to a man running for his life and for his liberty through tangled swamps and listening to the baying of blood hounds, and when he listened for them this voice came from heaven: "Servants be obedient unto your masters." [Laughter and applause.] That is civilization. Think what slaves we have been! Think how we have crouched and cringed before wealth even! How they used to cringe in old times before a man who was rich—there are so many of them gone into bankruptcy lately that we are losing a little of our fear. [Laughter.]

We used to worship the golden calf, and the worst you can say of us now, is we worship the gold of the calf, and even the calves are beginning to see this distinction. We used to go down on our knees to every man that held office, now he must fill it if he wishes any respect. We care nothing for the rich, except what will they do with their money? Do they benefit mankind? That is the question. You say this man holds an office. How does he fill it?—that is the question. And there is rapidly growing up in the world an aristocracy of heart and brain—the only aristocracy that has a right to exist. [Applause.] We are getting free. We are thinking in every direction. We are investigating with the microscope and the telescope. We are digging into the earth and finding souvenirs of all the ages. We are finding out something about the laws of health and disease. We are adding years to the span of human life and we are making the world fit to live in. That is what we are doing and every man



that has an honest thought and expresses it helps, and every man that tries to keep honest thought from being expressed is an obstruction and a hinderance.

Now if men have been slaves what shall we say of women? They have been the slaves of slaves. The meaner a man is the better he thinks he is than a woman. [Laughter.] As a rule you take an ignorant, brutal man—don't talk to him about a woman governing him, he don't believe it—not he; and nearly every religion of this world has been gallant enough to account for all the trouble and misfortune we have had by the crime of woman.

Even if it is true, I do not care; I had rather live in a world full of trouble with the woman I love than in heaven with nobody but men. [Laughter and applause.] Nearly every religion accounts for all the trouble we have ever had by the crime of woman. I recollect one book where I read an account of what is called the creation—I am not giving the exact words—I will give the substance of it. The supreme being thought best to make a world and one man—never thought about making a woman at that time—making a woman was a second thought, and I am free to admit that second thoughts as a rule are best. [Laughter.] He made this world and one man, and put this man in a park, or garden, or public square, or whatever you might call it, to dress and keep it. The man had nothing to do. He moped around there as though he was waiting for a train. [Laughter.] And the supreme being noticed that he got lonesome—I am glad he did! It occurred to him that he would make a companion, and having made the world and one man out of nothing, and having used up all the nothing [Laughter] he had to take a part of the man to start the woman with—I am not giving the exact language, neither do I say this story is true—I do not know—I would not want to deceive anybody.

So sleep fell upon this man, and they took from his side a rib—the French would call it a cutlet. [Laughter.] And out of that they made a woman, and taking into consideration the amount and quality of the raw material used, I look upon it as the most successful job ever accomplished in this world. [Great laughter and applause.] I am giving just a rough outline of this story. After he got the woman done she was brought to the man—not to see how *she* liked him, but to see how *he* liked her. He liked her and they went to keeping house. Before she was made there was really nothing to do; there was no news,

no politics, no religion, not even civil service reform. [Laughter.] And as the devil had not yet put in an appearance there was no chance to conciliate him. [Laughter.] They started in the keeping house business, and they were told they could do anything they liked except eat an apple. Of course they ate it; they were pleased and they ate it. I would have done it myself I know. I am satisfied I would have had an apple off that tree, if I were there, in fifteen minutes. [Laughter.] They were caught at it, of course, and they were turned out, and there was an extra police force put on to keep them from coming in again. And then measles, and whooping cough, and mumps, &c., started in the race of man; roses began to have thorns and snakes began to have teeth, and people began to fight about religion and politics, and they have been fighting and scratching each others eyes out from that day to this. [Laughter.]

I read in another book an account of the same transaction. They tell us the Supreme Brahma made up his mind to make a man, a woman, and a world; and that he put this man and woman in the Isle of Ceylon. According to the description, it was the most beautiful isle that ever existed; it beggared the description of a Chicago land agent completely. [Laughter.] It was delightful; the branches of the trees were so arranged that when the wind swept through them they seemed like a thousand Æolian harps, and the man was named Adami, and the woman's name was Heva. This book was written about three or four thousand years before the other one, and all the commentators in this country agree that the story that was written first was copied from the one that was written last. I hope you will not let a matter of three or four thousand years interfere with your ideas on the subject. The Supreme Brahma said: "Let them have a period of courtship, because it is my desire that true love always should precede marriage"—and that was so much better than lugging her up to him and saying, "Do you like her?" that upon my word I said when I read it, "if either one of these stories turn out to be true, I hope it will be this one."

They had a courtship in the starlight and moonlight, and perfume laden air with the nightingale singing his song of joy, and they got in love. There was nobody to bother them, no prospective fathers or mothers-in-law, no gossiping neighbors, nobody to say "young man, how do you propose to support her"—they got in love and they were married, and they started



keeping house and the Supreme Brahma said to them: "You must not leave this island." After awhile the man got uneasy—wanted to go West. [Laughter.] He went to the western extremity of the island and there the devil got up, and when he looked over on the main land he saw such hills and valleys and torrents and such mountains crowned with snow; such cataracts robed in glory, that he went right back to Heva. Says he: "Come over here; it is a thousand times better;" says he: "let us emigrate." She said, like any other woman: "No, let well enough alone; we have no rent to pay, and no taxes; we are doing very well now, let us stay where we are." But he insisted and so she went with him, and when he got to this western extremity where there was a little neck of land leading to this better land he took her on his back and walked over, and the moment he got over he heard a crash, and he looked back and this narrow neck of land had sunk into the sea, leaving here and there a rock (and those rocks are called even unto this day the footsteps of Adami) and when he looked back this beautiful mirage had disappeared. Instead of verdure and flowers there was naught but rocks and sand, and then he heard the voice of the Supreme Brahma crying out cursing them both to the lowest hell, and then it was that Adami said "Curse me if you choose but not her; it was not her fault, it was mine; curse me." That is the kind of a man to start a world with. [Laughter.] And the Supreme Brahma said "I will spare her, but I will not spare you." Then she spoke out of a breast so full of affection that she has left a legacy of love to all her daughters. "If thou wilt not spare him, spare neither me, because I love him." Then the Supreme Brahma said—and I have liked him ever since—"I will spare both and watch over you and your children forever."

Now, really this story appears to me better than the other one. It is loftier; there is more in it that I can admire. In order to show you that humanity does not belong to any particular nation, and that there are great and tender souls, let me tell you a little more that is in this book.

"Blessed is that man, and beloved of all the Gods who is afraid of no man, and of whom no man is afraid." Think of that kind of character! Another, "Man is strength, woman is beauty; man is courage, woman is love; and where the one man loves the one woman the very angels leave heaven and come and sit in that house and sing for joy." I think that is nearly equal to this: "If you do not want your

wife give her a writing of divorcement," and make the mother of your children a houseless wanderer and a vagrant—nearly as good as that. I believe that marriage should be a perfect partnership; that woman should have all the rights that man has, and one more—the right to be protected. I believe in marriage. It took hundreds and thousands of years for woman to get from a state of abject slavery up to the height even of marriage. I have not the slightest respect for the ideas of those short-haired women and long-haired men [Laughter] who denounce the institution of the family, who denounce the institution of marriage; but I hold in greater contempt the husband who would enslave his wife. I hold in greater contempt the man who is anything in his family except love and tenderness and kindness. [Applause.] I say it took hundreds of years for woman to come from a state of slavery to marriage; and ladies, the chains that were upon your necks and the bracelets that were put upon your arms were iron, and they have been changed by the touch of the wand of civilization to shining, glittering gold. Woman came from a condition of abject slavery and thousands and thousands of them are in that condition now. I believe marriage should be a perfect and equal partnership. I do not like a man who thinks he is boss. That fellow in the dugout was always talking about being boss. I do not like a man who thinks he is the head of the family. I do not like a man who thinks he has got authority and that the woman belongs to him—that wants for his wife a slave. I would not have a slave for my wife. I would not want the love of a woman that is not great enough, grand enough, and splendid enough to be free. I will never give to any woman my heart upon whom I afterwards would put chains. Do you know sometimes I think generosity is about the only virtue there is. How I do hate a man that has to be begged and importuned every minute for a few cents by his wife. "Give me a dollar?" "What did you do with that fifty cents I gave you last Christmas?" [Laughter.] If you make your wife a perpetual beggar, what kind of children do you expect to raise with a beggar for their mother? If you want great children, if you want to people this world with great and grand men and women they must be born of love and liberty. I have known men that would trust a woman with their heart—if you call that thing which pushes their blood around a heart, and with their honor—if you call



that fear of getting into the penitentiary honor—I have known men that would trust that heart and that honor with a woman, but not their pocket book—not a dollar, bill. When I see a man of that kind, I think they know better than I do which of these three articles is the most valuable. [Laughter.] I believe if you have got a dollar in the world and you have got to spend it, spend it like a man; spend it like a king, like a prince. If you have to spend it, spend it as though it was a dried leaf, and you were the owner of unbounded forests. I had rather be a beggar and spend my last dollar like a king than be a king and spend my money like a beggar. [Applause.] What is it worth compared with the love of one splendid woman? People tell me that is very good doctrine for rich folks, but it won't do for poor folks. I tell you that there is more love in the huts and homes of the poor, than in the mansions of the rich, and the meanest hut with love in it is a palace fit for the gods, and a palace without that is a den only fit for wild beasts. The man who has the love of one splendid woman is a rich man. Joy is wealth, and love is the legal tender of the soul! Love is the only thing that will pay ten per cent. to borrower and lender both; and if some men were as ashamed of appearing cross in public as they are of appearing tender at home, this world would be infinitely better. I think you can make your home a heaven if you want to—you can make up your minds to that. When a man comes home let him come home like a ray of light in the night bursting through the doors and illuminating the darkness. What right has a man to assassinate joy and murder the sanctuary of love—a cross man, a peevish man—is that the way he courted? Was there always something ailing him? Was he too nervous to hear her speak? When I see a man of that kind I am always sorry that doctors know so much about preserving life as they do. [Laughter.] It is not necessary to be rich, nor powerful nor great to be a success; and neither is it necessary to have your name between the putrid lips of rumor to be great. We have had a false standard of success. In the years when I was a little boy we read in our books that no fellow was a success that did not make a fortune or get a big office, and he generally was a man that slept about three hours a night. They never put down in the books the names of those gentlemen that succeeded in life that slept all they wanted to; and we all thought that we could not sleep to exceed three or four

hours if we ever expected to be anything in this world. [Laughter.] We have had a wrong standard. The happy man is the successful man; and the man who makes somebody else happy, is a happy man. The man that has gained the love of one good, splendid, pure woman his life has been a success, no matter if he dies in the ditch; and if he gets to be a crowned monarch of the world, and never had the love of one splendid heart, his life has been an ashen vapor.

A little while ago I stood by the tomb of the first Napoleon, a magnificent tomb of gilt and gold, fit almost for a dead deity, and here was a great circle, and in the bottom there, in a sarcophagus, rested at last the restless ashes of that man. I looked at that tomb, and I thought about the career of the greatest soldier of the modern world. As I looked I could see him walking up and down the banks of the Seine contemplating suicide. I could see him at Toulon; I could see him at Paris, putting down the mob; I could see him at the head of the army of Italy; I could see him cross the bridge of Lodi with the tricolor in his hand; I saw him in Egypt, fighting battles under the shadow of the Pyramids; I saw him returning; saw him conquer the Alps and mingle the eagles of France with the eagles of Italy; I saw him at Marengo, I saw him at Austerlitz; I saw him in Russia where the infantry of the snow and the blast smote his legions with the icy winds of winter. I saw him at Leipsic; hurled back upon Paris; banished; and I saw him escape from Elba and retake an empire by the force of his genius. I saw him at the field of Waterloo, where fate and chance combined to wreck the fortunes of their former king. I saw him at St. Helena with his hands behind his back, gazing out upon the sad and solemn sea, and I thought of all the widows he had made, of all the orphans, of all the tears that had been shed for his glory; and I thought of the woman, the only woman who ever loved him, pushed from his heart by the cold hand of ambition—and I said to myself, as I gazed, I would rather have been a French peasant and worn wooden shoes, and lived in a little hut with a vine running over the door and the purple grapes growing red in the amorous kisses of the autumn sun—I would rather have been that poor French peasant, and sit in my door, with my wife knitting by my side and my children upon my knees with their arms about my neck—I would rather have lived and died unnoticed and unknown except by those who loved me, and gone



down to the voiceless silence of the dreamless dust—I would rather have been that French peasant than to have been that imperial impersonation of force and murder who covered Europe with blood and tears. [Great applause.] I tell you I had rather make somebody happy, I would rather have the love of somebody; I would rather go to the forest, far away, and build me a little cabin—build it myself and daub it with mud, and live there with my wife and children; I had rather go there and live by myself—our little family—and have a little path that led down to the spring, where the water bubbled out day and night like a little poem from the heart of the earth; a little hut with some hollyhocks at the corner, with their bannered bosoms open to the sun, and with the thrush in the air, like a song of joy in the morning; I would rather live there and have some lattice work across the window, so that the sunlight would fall checkered on the baby in the cradle; I would rather live there and have my soul erect and free, than to live in a palace of gold and wear the crown of imperial power and know that my soul was slimy with hypocrisy. It is not necessary to be rich and great and powerful in order to be happy. If you will treat your wife like a splendid flower, she will fill your life with perfume and with joy. I believe in the democracy of the fireside, I believe in the republicanism of home, in the equality of man and woman, in the equality of husband and wife, and for this I am denounced by the sentinels upon the walls of Zion. [Laughter.] They say there must be a head to the family. I say no—equal rights for man and wife, and where there is really love there is liberty, and where the idea of authority comes in you will find that love has spread its pinions and flown forever. It is a splendid thing for me to think that when a woman really loves a man he never grows old in her eyes; she always sees the gallant gentleman that won her hand and heart; and when a man really and truly loves a woman she does not grow old to him; through the wringles of years he sees the face he loved and won. That is all there is in this world—all the rest amounts to nothing—it is a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing. You take from the family love, and nothing is left. There must be equality; there must be no master; there must be no servant. There must be equality and kindness. The man should be infinitely tender towards the woman—and why?—because she cannot go at hard work, she cannot make her own living, she has

squandered her wealth of beauty and youth upon him.

Now, if women have been slaves, what do you say about children? Children have been the slaves of the slaves of slaves. I know children that turn pale with fright when they hear their mother's voice; children of poverty, children of crime, children of sub-cellars; children of the narrow streets, the flotsam and jetsam upon the wild, rude sea of life—my heart goes out to them one and all; I say they have got all the rights we have and one more—the right to be protected. I believe in governing children by kindness, by love, by tenderness. If a child commits a fault take it in your arms let your heart beat against its heart; don't go and talk to it about hell and the bankruptcy of the universe. If your child tells a lie—what of it? Be honest with the child tell him you told hundreds of them yourself. [Laughter.] Then your child will not be afraid to tell you when it commits a fault; it will not regard you as old perfection until it gets a few years older and finds you are an old hypocrite—[laughter]—and you cannot put a thick enough veil upon you but what the eyes of childhood will peep through it; they will see; they will find out; and when your child tells a lie, examine yourself, and in all probability you will find you have been a tyrant. A tyrant father will have liars for his children. A liar is born of tyranny on the one hand and fear on the other. Truth comes from the lips of courage; it is born in confidence and honor. If you want a child to tell you the truth you want to be a truthful man yourself. You go at your little child, five or six years old, with a stick in your hand—what is he to do? Tell the truth? Then he will get whipped. What is he to do? I thank mother nature for putting ingenuity in the mind of a little child so that when it is attacked by a brutal parent it throws up a little breast work in the shape of a lie. That being done by nations it is called strategy [laughter] and many a general wears his honors for having practiced it; and will you deny it to little children to protect themselves from brutal parents. Supposing a man as much larger than we are as we are larger than a child would come at us with a liberty pole in his hand [prolonged laughter] and would shout in tones of thunder, "Who broke that plate?" Every one of us—including myself—would just stand right up and swear either that we never saw that plate, or that it was cracked when we got it. [Renewed laughter.] Give a child a chance; there is no



other way to have children tell the truth—tell the truth to them—keep your contracts with your children the same as you would with your banker. I was up at Grand Rapids, Michigan, the other day. There was a gentleman there, and his wife, who had promised to take their little boy for a ride every night for ten days, or every day for ten days, but they did not do it. They slipped out to the barn and they went without him. The day before I was there they played the same game on him again. He is a nice little boy, an American boy, a boy with brains, one of those boys that don't take the hatchet story as a fact [laughter.]—he had his own ideas. They fooled him again, and they came around the corner as big as life, man and wife. The little fellow was standing on the door-step with his nurse, and he looked at them, and he made this remark: "There go the two damndest liars in Grand Rapids." I merely tell you this story to show you that children have level heads; they understand this business. Teach your children to tell you the truth—tell them the truth. If there is one here that ever intends to whip his child I have a favor to ask, have your photograph taken when you are in the act, with your red and vulgar face, your brow corrugated, pretending you would rather be whipped yourself. Have the child's photograph taken too, with his eyes streaming with tears, and his chin dimpled with fear as a little sheet of water struck by a sudden cold wind; and if your child should die I cannot think of a sweeter way to spend an afternoon than to go to the graveyard in the autumn, when the maples are clad in pink and gold, when the little scarlet runners come like poems out of the breast of the earth—go there and sit down and look at that photograph and think of the flesh now dust, and how you caused it to writhe in pain and agony. I will tell you what I am doing; I am doing what little I can to save the flesh of children. You have no right to whip them. It is not the way; and yet some Christians drive their children from their dooors if they do wrong, especially if it is a sweet, tender girl—I believe there is no instance on record of any veal being given for the return of a girl [laughter.]—some Christians drive them from their doors and then go down upon their knees and ask God to take care of their children! I will never ask God to take care of my children unless I am doing my level best in that same direction. Some Christians act as though they only thought

when the Lord said, "Suffer little children to come unto me" that he had a raw hide under his mantle—they act as if they thought so. That is all wrong. I tell my children this: Go where you may, commit what crime you may, fall to what depths of degradation you may, I can never shut my arms, my heart or my doors to you. As long as I live you shall have one sincere friend; do not be afraid to tell anything wrong you have done; ten to one if I have not done the same thing. I am not perfection, and if it is necessary to sin in order to have sympathy, I am glad I have committed enough to have sympathy. The sternness of perfection I do not want. I am going to live so that my children can come to my grave and truthfully say, "He who sleeps here never gave us one moment of pain." Whether you call that religion or infidelity suit yourselves; that is the way I intend to do it.

When I was a little fellow most everybody thought that some days were too sacred for the young ones to enjoy themselves in. That was the general idea. Sunday used to commence Saturday night at sundown, under the old text, "The evening and the morning were the first day"—they commenced then, I think, to get a good ready. [Laughter.] When the sun went down Saturday night darkness ten thousand times deeper than ordinary night fell upon that house. The boy that looked the sickest was regarded as the most pious. [Laughter.] You could not crack hickory nuts that night, and if you were caught chewing gum it was another evidence of the total depravity of the human heart. [Laughter.] It was a very solemn evening. We would sometimes sing "Another day has passed." Everybody looked as though they had the dyspepsia—you know lots of people think they are pious, just because they are bilious, as Mr. Hood says. [Laughter.] It was a solemn night, and the next morning the solemnity had increased. Then we went to church, and the minister was in a pulpit about twenty feet high. If it was in the winter there was no fire; it was not thought proper to be comfortable while you were thanking the Lord. The minister commenced at firstly and ran up to about twenty-fourthly, and then he divided it up again: and then he made some concluding remarks, and then he said lastly, and when he said lastly he was about half through. [Laughter.] Then we had what was called the catechism—the chief end of man. I think that has a tendency to make a boy kind of bubble up cheerfully. [Smiles.] We sat along on a



bench with our feet about eight inches from the floor. The minister said, "Boys, do you know what becomes of the wicked?" We all answered as cheerfully as grasshoppers in Minnesota, "Yes, sir." "Do you know, boys, that you all ought to go to hell?" "Yes, sir." As a final test: "Boys, would you be willing to go to hell if it was God's will?" And every little liar said, "Yes, sir." The dear old minister used to try to impress upon our minds about how long we would stay there after we had got there, and he used to say in an awful tone of voice—do you know I think that is what gives them the bronchitis—that tone—you never heard of an auctioneer having it—"Suppose that once in a billion of years a bird were to come from some far, distant clime and carry off in its bill a grain of sand, when the time came when the last animal matter of which this mundane sphere is composed would be carried away, said he, "boys by that time in hell it would not be sun up." [Laughter.] We had this sermon in the morning and the same one in the afternoon, only he commenced at the other end. Then we started home full of doctrine—"Not a soldier discharged his fare—well shot." We went sadly and solemnly back. If it was in the summer and the weather was good and we had been good boys, they used to take us down to the graveyard, and to cheer us up we had a little conversation about coffins, and shrouds, and worms, and bones, and dust, and I must admit that it did cheer me up when I looked at those sunken graves, those stones, those names half effaced with the decay of years. I felt cheered, for I said, "this thing can't last always." Then we had to read a good deal. We were not allowed to read joke books or anything of that kind. We read Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*; Fox's *Book of Martyrs*; Milton's *History of the Waldenses*, and Jenkins on the Atonement. I generally read Jenkins; [laughter] and I have often thought that the atonement ought to be pretty broad in its provisions to cover the case of a man that would write a book like that for a boy. Then we used to go and see how the sun was getting on—when the sun was down the thing was over. I would sit three or four hours reading Jenkins, and then go out and the sun would not have gone down perceptibly. I used to think it stuck there out of simple pure cussedness. But it went down at last, it had to; that was a part of the plan, and as the last rim of light would sink below the horizon, off would go our hats and we would give three cheers for liberty once

again. [Laughter.] I do not believe in making Sunday hateful children. I believe in allowing them to be happy, and no day can be so sacred but that the laugh of a child will make it holier still. [Applause.] There is no God in the heavens that is pleased at the sadness of childhood. You cannot make me believe that. You fill their poor little sweet hearts with the fearful doctrines of hell. A little child goes out into the garden; there is a tree covered with a glory of blossoms and the child leans against it, and there is a little bird on the bough singing and swinging, and the waves of melody run out of its tiny throat, thinking about four little speckled eggs in the nest warmed by the breast of its mate, and the air is filled with perfume, and that little child leans against that tree and thinks about hell and the worm that never dies—think of filling the mind of a child with that infamous dogma!

Where was that doctrine of hell born? Where did it come from? It came from that gentleman in the dug-out, it was a souvenir from the lower animals. I honestly believe that the doctrine of hell was born in the glittering eyes of snakes that run in frightful coils watching for their prey. I believe it was born in the yelping and howling and growling and snarling of wild beasts. I believe it was born in the grin of hyenas and in the malicious chatter of depraved apes. I despise it, I defy it, and I hate it; and when the great ship freighted with the world goes down in the night of death, chaos and disaster, I will not be guilty of the ineffable meanness of pushing from my breast my wife and children and paddling off in some orthodox canoe. I will go down with those I love and with those who love me. I will go down with the ship and with my race. I will go where there is sympathy. I will go with those I love. Nothing can make me believe that there is any being that is going to burn and torment and damn his children forever. No, sir! You will never make me believe you can divide the world up into saints and sinners, and that the saints are all going to heaven and the others to hell. I don't believe that you can draw the line. You are sometimes in the presence of a great disaster; there is a fire; at the fourth story window you see the white face of a woman with a child in her arms and humanity calls out for somebody to go to the rescue through that smoke and flame, may be death. They don't call for a Baptist, nor a Presbyterian, nor a Methodist, but humanity calls for a *man*. And all at once, out steps



somebody that nobody ever did think was much, not a very good man, and yet he springs up the ladder and is lost in the smoke, and a moment afterward he emerges, and the cruel serpents of fire climb and hiss around his brave form, but he goes on and you see that woman and child in his arms, and you see them come down and they are handed to the bystanders, and he has fainted, may be, and the crowd stand hushed, as they always do, in the presence of a grand action, and a moment after the air is rent with a cheer. Tell me that that man is going to hell, who is willing to lose his life merely to keep a woman and child from the torment of a moment's flame—tell me that he is going to hell; I tell you that it is a falsehood, and if anybody says so he is mistaken.

I have seen upon the battle field a boy sixteen years of age struck by the fragment of a shell and life oozing slowly from the ragged lips of his death wound, and I have heard him and seen him die with a curse upon his lips and he had the face of his mother in his heart. Do you tell me that that boy left that field of battle where he died that the flag of his country might wave forever in the air—do you tell me that he went from that field where he lost his life in defense of the liberties of men to an eternal hell? I tell you it is infamous!—and such a doctrine as that would tarnish the reputation of a hyena and smirch the fair fame of an anaconda. [Laughter.] Let us see whether we are to believe it or not. We had a war a little while ago and there was a draft made and there was many a good Christian hired another fellow to take his place, hired one that was wicked, hired a sinner to go to hell in his place for five hundred dollars! [Laughter.] While if *he* was killed he would go to heaven. Think of that. Think of a man willing to do that for five hundred dollars! I tell you when you come right down to it they have got too much heart to believe it; they say they do, but they do not appreciate it. They do not believe it. They would go crazy if they did. They would go insane. If a woman believed it, looking upon her little dimpled darling in the cradle, and said, "Nineteen chances in twenty I am raising fuel for hell," she would go crazy. They don't believe it, and can't believe it. The old doctrine was that the angels in heaven would become happier as they looked upon those in hell. That is not the doctrine now; we have civilized it. That is not the doctrine—what is the doctrine now? The doctrine is that those in heaven

can look upon the agonies of those in hell, whether it is a fire or whatever it is, without having the happiness of those in heaven decreased—that is the doctrine. That is preached to-day in every orthodox pulpit in Harrisburg. Let me put one case and I will be through with this branch of the subject. A husband and wife love each other. The husband is a good fellow and the wife a splendid woman. They live and love each other and all at once he is taken sick, and they watch day after day and night after night around his bedside until their property is wasted and finally she has to go to work, and she works through eyes blinded with tears, and the sentinel of love watches at the bedside of her prince, and at the least breath or the least motion she is awake; and she attends him night after night and day after day for years, and finally he dies, and she has him in her arms and covers his wasted face with the tears of agony and love. He is a believer and she is not. He dies, and she buries him and puts flowers above his grave, and she goes there in the twilight of evening and she takes her children, and tells her little boys and girls through her tears how brave and how true and how tender their father was, and finally she dies and she goes to hell because she was not a believer; and he goes to the battlements of heaven and looks over and sees the woman who loved him with all the wealth of her love, and whose tears made his dead face holy and sacred, and he looks upon her in the agonies of hell without having his happiness diminished in the least. With all due respect to everybody I say, damn any such doctrine as that. [Great sensation.] It is infamous! it never ought to be preached; it never ought to be believed. We ought to be true to our hearts, and the best revelation of the Infinite is the human heart.

Now, I come back to where I started from. They used to think that a certain day was too good for a child to be happy in, so they filled the imagination of this child with these horrors of hell. I said, and I say again, no day can be so sacred but that the laugh of a child will make the holiest day more sacred still. Strike with hand of fire, oh, weird musician, thy harp strung with Apollo's golden hair; fill the vast cathedral aisles with symphonies sweet and dim, deft toucher of the organ keys; blow, bugler, blow, until thy silver notes do touch the keys with moonlit waves and charm the lovers wandering on the vine-clad hills; but know your sweetest strains are discords all compared with childhood's happy laugh, the laugh that fills the eyes with light and



every heart with joy; oh, rippling river of life, thou art the blessed boundary line between the beasts and man, and every wayward wave of thine doth drown some fiend of care; oh, laughter, divine daughter of joy, make dimples enough in the cheeks of the world to catch and hold and glorify all the tears of grief.

I am opposed to any religion that makes them melancholy, that makes children sad and that fills the human heart with shadow.

Give a child a chance. When I was a boy we always went to bed when were not sleepy, and we always got up when we were sleepy. [Laughter.] Let a child commence at which end of the day they please, that is there business; they know more about it than all the doctors in the world. The voice of nature when a man is free, is the voice of right, but when his passions have been dammed up by custom the moment that is withdrawn he rushes to some excess. Let him be free from the first. Let your children grow in the free air and they will fill your house with perfume. Do not create a child to be a post set in an orthodox row; raise investigators and thinkers, not disciples and followers; cultivate reason, not faith; cultivate investigation, not superstition; and if you have any doubt yourself about a thing being so, tell them about it; don't tell them the world was made in six days—if you think six days means six good whiles tell them six good whiles. If you have any doubts about anybody being in a furnace and not being burnt, or even getting uncomfortably warm, tell them so—be honest about it. If you look upon the jaw bone of a donkey as not a good weapon, say so. Give a child a chance. If you think a man never went to sea in a fish, tell them so, it wont make them any worse. Be honest—that is all; don't cram their heads with things that will take them years and years to unlearn; tell them facts—it is just as easy. It is as easy to find out botany, and astronomy, and geology, and history—it is as easy to find out all these things as to cram their minds with things you know nothing about, and where a child knows what the name of a flower is when it sees it, the name of a bird and all those things, the world becomes interesting everywhere, and they do not pass by the flowers—they are not deaf to all the songs of birds, simply because they are walking along thinking about hell. [Laughter.] I tell you, this is a pretty good world if we only love somebody in it, if we only make somebody happy, if we are only honor-

bright in it, if we have no fear. That is my doctrine. I like to hear children at the table telling what big things they have seen during the day; I like to hear their merry voices mingling with the clatter of knives and forks. I had rather hear that than any opera that was ever put on the stage. I hate this idea of authority. I hate dignity. I never saw a dignified man that was not after all an old idiot. Dignity is a mask; a dignified man is afraid that you will know he does not know everything. A man of sense and argument is always willing to admit what he don't know—why?—because there is so much that he does know; and that is the first step towards learning anything—willingness to admit what you don't know and when you don't understand a thing, ask—no matter how small and silly it may look to other people—ask, and after that you know. A man never is in a state of mind that he can learn until he gets that dignified nonsense out of him, and so, I say let us treat our children with perfect kindness and tenderness.

Now, then, I believe in absolute intellectual liberty; that a man has a right to think, and think wrong, provided he does the best he can to think right—that is all. I have no right to say that Mr. Smith shall not think; Mr. Smith has no right to say I shall not think; I have no right to go and pull a clergyman out of his pulpit and say: "You shall not preach that doctrine," but I have just as much right as he has to say my say. I have no right to lie about a clergyman, and with great modesty I claim—and with some timidity—that he has no right to slander me—that is all.

I claim that every man and wife are equal, except that she has the right to be protected; that there is nothing like the democracy of the home and the republicanism of the fireside, and that a man should study to make his wife's life one perpetual poem of joy; that there should be nothing but kindness and goodness; and then I say that children should be governed by love, by kindness, by tenderness, and by the sympathy of love, kindness and tenderness. That is the religion I have got, and it is good enough for me whether it suits anybody else in the world or not. I think it is altogether more important to believe in my wife than it is to believe in the Master; I think it is altogether more important to love my children than the twelve apostles—that is my doctrine. I may be wrong, but that is it. I think more of the living than I do of the dead. This world is for the living. The



grave is not a throne, and a corpse is not a king. The living have a right to control this world. I think a good deal of more of to-day than I do of yesterday, and I think more of to-morrow than I do of this day; because, it is nearly gone—that is the way I feel, and this is my creed: The time to be happy is now; the way to be happy is to make somebody else happy; and the place to be happy is here. I never will consent to drink skim milk here with the promise of cream somewhere else. [Laughter.]

Now, my friends, I have some excuses to offer for the race to which I belong.

In the first place, this world is not very well adapted to raising good people; there is but one-quarter of it land to start with; it is three times as well adapted to fish culture as it is to man, and of that one-quarter there is but a small belt where they raise men of genius. There is one strip from which all the men and women of genius come. When you go too far north you find no brain; when you go too far south you find no genius, and there never has been a high degree of civilization except where there is winter. I say that winter is the father and mother of the fireside, the family of nations; and around that fire-side blossom the fruits of our race. In a country where they don't need any bed-clothes except the clouds, revolution is the normal condition—not much civilization there. When in the winter I go by a house where the curtain is a little bit drawn, and I look in there and see children poking the fire and wishing they had as many dollars or knives or something else as there are sparks; when I see the old man smoking and the smoke curling above his head like incense from the altar of domestic peace, the other children reading or doing something, and the old lady with her needle and shears—I never pass such a scene that I do not feel a little ache of joy in my heart. A while ago they were talking about annexing San Domingo. They said it was the finest soil in the world, and so on. Says I, "It don't raise the right kind of food; you take five thousand of the best people in the world and let them settle there and you will see the second generation barefooted, with the hair sticking out of the top of their sombreros; you will see them riding bare-backed with a rooster under each arm, going to a cock fight on Sunday. [Laughter.] That is one excuse I have got.

Another is, I think we came from the lower animals. I am not dead sure of it. On that question I stand about eight to seven. [Laughter.] If there is nothing of

the snake, or hyena, or jackal in man, why would he cut his brother's throat for a difference of belief? Why would he build dungeons and burn the flesh of his brother man with red hot irons? I think we came from the lower animals. When I first heard that doctrine I did not like it. I felt sorry for our English friends, who would have to trace their pedigree back to the Duke of Ourang-outang, or the Earl of Chimpanzee. But I have read so much about rudimentary bones and rudimentary muscles that I began to doubt about it. Says I: "What do you mean by rudimentary muscles?" They say: "A muscle that has gone into bankruptcy—" "Was it a large muscle?" "Yes." "What did our forefathers use it for?" They say: "To flap their ears with." After I found that out I was astonished to find that they had become rudimentary; I know so many people for whom it would be handy to-day, so many people where that would have been on an exact level with their intellectual development. [Laughter.] So after a while I began to like it, and says I to myself: "You have got to come to it." I thought after all I had rather belong to a race of people that came from skulless vertebræ in the dim Laurentian period, that wiggled without knowing they were wiggling, that began to develop and came up by a gradual development until they struck this gentleman in the dugout coming up slowly—up—up—up—until, for instance, they produced such a man as Shakespeare—he who harvested all the fields of dramatic thought, and after whom all others have been only gleaners of straw—he who found the human intellect dwelling in a hut, touched it with the wand of his genius and it became a palace—producing him and hundreds of others I might mention—with the angel of progress leaning over the the far horizon beckoning this race of work and thought—I had rather belong to a race commencing at the skulless vertebræ producing the gentleman in the dugout and so on up, than to have descended from a perfect pair, upon which the Lord has lost money from that day to this. [Laughter.] I had rather belong to a race that is going up than to one that is going down. I would rather belong to one that commenced at the skulless vertebræ and started for perfection, than to belong to one that started from perfection and started for the skulless vertebræ.

These are the excuses I have for my race, and taking everything into consideration, I think we have done extremely well.



Let us have more liberty and free thought. Free thought will give us truth. It is too early in the history of the world to write a creed. Our fathers were intellectual slaves; their fathers were intellectual serfs. There never has been a free generation on the globe. Every creed you have got bears the mark of whip, and chain, and fagot. There has been no creed written by a free brain. Wait until we have had two or three generations of liberty and it will then be time enough to seize the swift horse of progress by the bridle and say—thus far and no farther; and in the meantime let us be kind to each other; let us be decent towards each other. We are all travelers on the great plain we call life and there is no body quite sure what road to take—not just dead sure, you know. There are lots of guide boards on the plain and you find thousands of people swearing to-day that their guide board is the only board that shows the right direction. I go and talk to them and they say: "You go that way, or you will be damned." I go to another and they say: "You go this way, or you will be damned." I find them all fighting and quarreling and beating each other, and then I say: "Let us cut down all these guide boards." "What," they say, "leave us without any guide boards?" I say: "Yes. Let every man take the road he thinks is right, and let everybody else wish him a happy journey; let us part friends." I say to you to-night, my friends, that I have no malice upon this subject—not a particle; I simply wish to express my thoughts. The world has grown better just in proportion as it is happier; the world has grown better just in proportion as it has lost superstition; the world has grown better just in the proportion that the sacerdotal class has lost influence—just exactly; the world has grown better just in proportion that secular ideas have taken possession of the world; The world has grown better just in proportion that it has ceased talking about the visions of the clouds, and talked about the realities of the earth. The world has grown better just in the proportion that it has grown free, and I want to do what little I can in my feeble way to add another flame to the torch of progress. I do not know, of course, what will come, but if I have said anything to-night that will make a husband love his wife better, I am satisfied; if I have said anything that will make a wife love her husband better, I am satisfied; if I have said anything that will add one

more ray of joy to life, I am satisfied; if I have said anything that will save the tender flesh of a child from a blow, I am satisfied; if I have said anything that will make us more willing to extend to others the right we claim for ourselves, I am satisfied. I do not know what inventions are in the brain of the future; I do not know what garments of glory may be woven for the world in the loom of the years to be; we are just on the edge of the great ocean of discovery. I do not know what is to be discovered; I do not know what science will do for us. I do know that science did just take a handful of sand and make the telescope, and with it read all the starry leaves of heaven; I know that science took the thunderbolts from the hands of Jupiter, and now the electric spark, freighted with thought and love, flashes under waves of the sea; I know that science stole a tear from the cheek of unpaid labor, converted it into steam, and created a giant that turns with tireless arms the countless wheels of toil; I know that science broke the chains from human limbs and gave us instead the forces of nature for our slaves; I know that we have made the attraction of gravitation work for us; we have made the lightnings our messengers; we have taken advantage of fire and flame and wind and sea: these slaves have no backs to be whipped; they have no hearts to be lacerated; they have no children to be stolen, no cradles to be violated. I know that science has given us better houses; I know it has given us better pictures and better books; I know it has given us better wives and better husbands, and more beautiful children. I know it has enriched a thousand fold our lives, and for that reason I am in favor of intellectual liberty. I know not, I say, what discoveries may lead the world to glory; but I do know that from the infinite sea of the future never a greater or grander blessing will strike this bank and shoal of time, than liberty for man, woman and child.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have delivered this lecture a great many times; clergymen have attended, and editors of religious newspapers, and they have gone away and written in their papers and declared in their pulpits that in this lecture I advocated universal adultery; they have gone away and said it was obscene and disgusting. Between me and my clerical maligners, between me and my religious slanderers, I leave you, ladies and gentlemen, to judge.



I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I always find time to think of my friends. I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I always find time to think of my friends. I have been thinking of you a great deal lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I always find time to think of my friends.

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